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ABSTRACT

This monograph provides a contextual statement and an introduction to some data from a study of high school students and their employment. The small amount of interpretive comment introduces the 31 tables and calls attention to specific data of particular significance. Data (presented in percentages) come from a survey of all (2056) junior and senior students in the Grand Forks and Fargo public schools (4 schools), 50% of the teachers (190 teachers) in these schools representing all subject fields, 160 parents of surveyed students, 50 employers of students in Grand Forks and Fargo, and school records of 350 of the students who completed the survey. Tables present these types of data: students employed and not employed, hours of work per week, employment sources, dollars per hour, sources used for employment, rationale for employment, student ratings of academic skills, perceived interests of parents, students' motivational level, school absence, employment attitudes, teacher perspectives about student employment, student participation and attendance in extracurricular activities, extracurricular and work hours by father's occupational status, and employer ratings of job performance, reliability, and assessment of academic skills. (YLB)

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Secondary School Students and Employment

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An Introduction to the Data

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SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS AND EMPLOYMENT

An Introduction to the Data

by

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FOREWORD

During the summer of 1979, the Bureau of Educational Research and Services provided financial support to assist in the conduct of a study to learn more about high school students and their work outside the school and home. Several people were involved in the planning for the study, several others assisted in the collection of the data before it was subsequently tallied and analyzed.

This monograph represents the first of the reports of that study. Much of the work involved in the planning and conducting of the study came from the ideas and coordination of Vito Perrone, Dean of the Center for Teaching and Learning, University of North Dakota. As well, most of the written narrative is his.

The Bureau of Educational Research and Services is happy to have had some involvement in this piece of work, and is hopeful that this and accompanying monographs in the set will be both informative and helpful to high school administrators, teachers, and students and their parents in the conduct of their high school educational experiences.

Larry L. Smiley, Director
Bureau of Educational Research and Services

Introduction

This monograph, one of several associated with our research on secondary school students and employment, provides a contextual statement and an introduction to some of our data. We have selected for presentation in tabular form information that we believe is of broad general interest. Because the information is particularly revealing on its own, we have offered very little interpretive comment. The narrative we do provide serves principally to introduce the tables and call attention to specific data of particular significance. Our data comes from a survey of all junior and senior students (N = 2056) in the Grand Forks and Fargo public schools (4 schools in all), a 50% sample of the teachers (N = 190) in these schools representing all subject fields, a sample of parents (N = 160) of those students surveyed in Grand Forks and Fargo, a sample of employers (N = 50) of high school students in Grand Forks and Fargo, and the school records of a sample of the high school students who completed the survey (N = 350). We use percentages throughout the data presentation.

Context

The vast majority of American young people, ages 15-18, attend and graduate from secondary schools. The graduation rate is close to 80% nationally and 90% in North Dakota. This was not the case a generation ago. Prior to 1950, for example, the majority of young people left school before graduation in order to enter the job

market.

Those who wrote about youth in the late 50's and 60's, a time when high school attendance was escalating rapidly, used the term "schooling society" to characterize this new circumstance. Associated with this "schooling society" was the belief that young people were engaged in an "extended adolescence" and lacked the work experience prevalent in earlier times. In the course of the 1970's, there was sufficient concern about the issue of work experience that "career education" became a prominent educational direction and a number of secondary school reform proposals gave significant attention to provisions for students to work in the market place.

At the risk of oversimplification, the reformist concerns were triggered by a sense that this extended adolescence had fostered higher levels of irresponsibility (increased drug and alcohol dependency being manifestations) and contributed to greater unemployment among young people aged 18-24.[1] The literature of reform suggested that young people in school were not being prepared sufficiently for the responsibilities of work and, as a result, could not cope constructively with work related adult life roles. The antidote which filled the reform agendas was to make work an inte-

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[1] In regard to employment readers might wish to read James O'Brien's "Education is Education, and Work is Work," Teachers College Record, Vol. 81, Fall 1979. O'Brien argues cogently that the high level of unemployment among 18-24 year olds has little to do with schooling, being instead a demographic related condition. He provides data to show that the population entering the labor market for the first time in the 70's, part of the earlier baby boom, exceeded to a great extent the supply of jobs.

gral part of student's high school education.[2] By integrating work experience into school programs students would be expected to make a natural transition to the world of work and would not flounder when faced with the need to be independent and personally responsible.

While most schools did not set about consciously to reform their institutions around the issue of work--schools seldom respond quickly and consciously to major national reports, no matter how prestigious the sources--work has become commonplace among high school students.[3] This came about in large measure as a result of the demand for student labor on the part of the burgeoning fast food industry. Given the economics of this particular industry, high school students willing to work for minimum wages and without

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[2]The major reports of the 1970's were: The Reform of Secondary Schools: A Report to the Public and the Profession, prepared by the National Committee for the Reform of Secondary Education (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973); American Youth in the Mid-70's (National Association of Secondary School Principals: Reston, VA, 1973); Youth: Transition to Adulthood, Report of the Panel on Youth of the President's Advisory Committee (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973);and Giving Youth a Better Chance: Options for Education, Work and Service. Report of the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education, Berkeley, CA, 1979. These reports all stressed the need for job placement programs, credit for work experience, flexible (even alternate day) schedules to accommodate work, etc.

[3]It is interesting to note that students were entering the world of work in increasing numbers during the 1970's without benefit of school initiatives and almost without notice. While sociologists such as James Coleman (Youth in Transition) and others involved in the major reports cited above bemoaned the fact that "students just didn't work," William Fetters collected data from 16,409 high school seniors in 1972 which showed that three/fourths were already working. (A Capsule Description of High School Seniors: Base Year Survey, Washington, D.C.: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Printing Office, 1974.) We believe that this was a typical pattern with which schools did not, and have not, come to terms.

benefits are virtually the only labor force available.[4]

A second contextual strand is the piece which caused us to examine more closely the issues outlined above. While serving with the North Dakota Task Force on Basic Skills during 1977-78, we heard a number of presentations of school administrators and teachers that focused on the "increasing difficulties in sustaining students' interest in school when so many worked extensive numbers of hours." By 1978, this work phenomenon was beginning to filter into their consciousness. While the school people believed that the percentage of students working "might be as high as 50%" and that "many worked as many as 40 hours," no one had any empirically derived information. We chose to examine the issue and its implications, if any, for schools.

Overview Data Presentation

How many students are employed? Employment was defined as a job with regularly scheduled hours and a payroll check; baby sitting, sporadic house cleaning, and the like, were not, for our purposes, considered employment.

Table 1

Percentage of Students Employed and Not Employed

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
Employed	68.1	69.0	67.0
Not Employed	31.9	31.0	33.0

[4]Employers in this industry made it clear to us in interviews that high school students are, in general, the only persons who apply for their employment vacancies.

Is 68.1% high? It is a higher percentage than teachers estimated to be the case. In addition, none of the school administrators envisioned the number to be that high.

How many hours per week did those employed actually work? We believe the information related to this question is startling.

Table 2

Number of Hours of Work Per Week
(Percent of population)

NUMBER OF HOURS	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
1-10	11.6	11.2	12.1
11-15	18.1	12.9	23.7
16-20	33.0	32.1	34.0
21-30	29.9	33.8	26.2
Over 31	7.5	9.8	3.9

Overall, 37.4% of those employed work more than 21 hours per week, 43.6% of the males and 30.1% of the females. A large number of students, 70.4% of the total, work 16 or more hours per week and a significant number, 7.5% overall, (9.8% of the males) work over 31 hours per week.

For the sake of general information, we should note that seniors tend to work more hours per week than juniors. We had anticipated that this would be true.

Where do the high school juniors and seniors work? We list in Table 3 those employment activities serving fairly large numbers of students.

Table 3

Employment Sources

Category of Work	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
Restaurant/Fast Food	41.4	36.6	45.8
Sales	13.8	9.6	18.3
Grocery/Supermarket	9.9	10.8	8.9
Custodial	8.6	14.2	2.6
Secretarial/Clerical	5.9	1.4	10.7
Service Station and Kindred Activity	5.7	10.9	--
Building Trades	4.0	7.1	.6
Health Related	3.2	.3	6.5

The restaurant/fast food industry is part of the 1970's economic revolution and is the principal employer of young people. Of special interest to us were the male-female employment patterns. In spite of the increasing emphasis in the culture on reducing the impact of traditional patterns, the employment patterns follow traditional structures. Note the positions in "sales", "secretarial/clerical" and "health related" areas in which women have tended to dominate and "custodial", "service station", and "building trades" fields traditionally dominated by men.

It should be noted that seniors work in a broader range of areas overall than do juniors. The percentage of juniors working in the fast food enterprises, for example, is considerably higher than the percentage of seniors. The fast food industry appears to be the principal entry level employment area.

How much do the students make? When these data were gathered, minimum wage was set at $2.90 per hour. It has increased since

these data were collected.

Table 4

Dollars per Hour

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
$3.00 or less	72.7	66.9	80.0
Above $3.01	27.3	33.1	20.0

Minimal wage is the typical pattern. As employers told us, "Only high school students will work for minimum wage." Again, note the male-female differences. These differences are related in large measure to the differences in areas of employment and numbers of hours worked.

How were the jobs secured? As part of their career education/vocational education efforts, all of the schools had developed job placement programs. To what degree were they used?

Table 5

Sources Used for Employment

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
Personal Effort	48.0	46.8	49.4
Friends	18.7	19.0	18.4
Family	15.2	19.1	10.9
School Services	10.2	7.5	13.1
North Dakota Job Service	7.9	7.7	8.1

As noted, school services ranked lower than most other services. We suspect this is true, in part, because the schools typically paid closer attention to such things as hours. People in

schools tend to view 10-15 hours as reasonable. Students, on the other hand, view 20-25 hours as being reasonable.

How do the students use their money? There are certainly no surprises. The percentages are larger than 100 inasmuch as most students indicated at least two categories of use.

Table 6

Uses of Money Earned Through Employment

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
Pleasurable Activities (Dates, cars, etc.)	72.4	80.8	64.3
Save for Future	49.0	42.4	57.4
Clothing, Books, Supplies for School	46.6	26.9	69.8
Give to Family	4.3	4.1	4.7

Note the male-female differences, especially in relation to "Save for the Future" and "Clothing, Books, Supplies for School."

Why are the students employed? Given the inflationary conditions that have dominated our economy, the responses are not unusual.

Table 7

Rationale for Employment

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
Need the money	81.5	80.1	84.6
Decided on My Own to Get a Job	47.4	41.9	54.3
Desire Training for Future Employment	23.8	18.0	30.8
Parents Told Me to Get a Job	9.2	8.5	10.2

Students did not view their employment, overall, as training for the future. This came out very strongly in the follow-up interviews we conducted. However, an interesting point is found in the fact that 30.8% of the females do see their work as training and, therefore, will more probably stay in that work for a time instead of seeking advancement. It should be noted, in addition, that parents were not the decisive factor in their decision-making.

How do students overall rate their academic skills? We will later relate these ratings to a number of variables relating to employment and socio-economic background.

Table 8

Student Ratings of Academic Skills

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
Mathematics			
High and Above Average	34.4	38.8	29.6
Below Average and Poor	15.9	14.8	17.1
Science			
High and Above Average	33.6	39.7	27.2
Below Average and Poor	16.4	14.2	18.8
Social Studies			
High and Above Average	40.3	48.5	31.3
Below Average and Poor	13.0	9.5	16.8
Oral Language			
High and Above Average	38.7	36.4	41.2
Below Average and Poor	10.8	13.7	7.7
Reading			
High and Above Average	47.5	43.2	52.0
Below Average and Poor	10.7	13.1	8.4
Writing			
High and Above Average	37.8	31.3	44.5
Below Average and Poor	12.0	16.6	6.9

By and large, students in Grand Forks and Fargo viewed their academic skills to be average or above. Note, however, the male-

female differences. Males rate their skills in mathematics, science and social studies higher than females while the reverse is true for oral language, reading and writing. These are old, continually persistent patterns that schools need to address much more aggressively. There just isn't any cognitive reason for females to have less skill in math and science, nor for males to have less skill in reading and writing.

What did students perceive their parents' interests to be in relation to their education? The percentages do not add up to 100 inasmuch as we did not include for this presentation all of the categories.

Table 9

Perceived Interests of Parents

	FATHER			MOTHER		
	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
Wishes me to be:						
One of the best in class	26.8	28.3	25.0	29.7	33.2	25.8
Above the average	42.2	42.2	42.3	44.7	44.4	45.1
Don't know	12.1	11.7	12.6	5.5	6.0	4.9
Wishes me to:						
Finish high school	12.1	11.8	12.3	11.2	11.0	11.4
Post high school vocational training	15.9	16.5	15.3	16.6	16.4	16.8
Some college but less than 4 years	6.5	5.5	7.5	7.2	5.7	8.8
Graduate from 4 year college or university	43.8	44.3	42.8	47.1	47.5	46.7
Professional or graduate school	11.5	11.4	11.6	10.9	11.5	10.2
Don't know	7.1	7.4	6.8	6.2	6.9	5.4

By and large, parents, as they are perceived by their children, have fairly high aspirations for their sons and daughters. As will be noted from a review of Table 10, parents are seen as having a somewhat higher interest in college/university attendance than is the case for the students themselves. In relation to the "wishes me to be" section of the foregoing table, the "don't know" category is interesting when paired with the fact that, when interviewed for this study, mothers were more active than fathers in the process. Fathers often deferred to their wives, suggesting, "my wife knows more about such things." These data suggest a continued stronger role of mothers in the nurturing process.

What are the motivational levels of the students?

Table 10

Motivational Levels of Students

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
Wish to:			
Be one of the best in my class	24.2	23.5	24.9
Be above the average	48.1	48.0	48.3
Be just good enough to get by	4.8	5.6	3.8
Graduate from 4 year college/ university	37.7	36.7	38.8
Graduate from professional or graduate school	17.2	17.9	16.4

Motivational levels are, from our perspective, quite high. In this regard, students differ in their responses from the responses of teachers to similar issues. Teachers, for example, view a significant percentage of the students as "just wanting to get by."

Is school absence an issue? We were surprised by the data on school absence.

Table 11

School Absence

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
None	4.7	5.8	3.5
1-2 days	17.0	19.4	14.3
3-6 days	32.7	33.8	31.6
7-15 days	26.4	22.7	30.5
16 or more days	19.2	18.3	20.1

We asked students if they ever stayed away from school because they "just didn't care to go." The majority responded affirmatively. Students who worked more than 20 hours per week were absent from school more than those who worked less than 20 hours per week or didn't work.

Table 12

Days of Absence from School and Hours of Work per Week

Days of Absence	Hours of Work/Week: Do not work	1 - 15 Hours	16 - 20 Hours	More than 21 hours
None	1.4	1.0	1.1	1.3
1-2	3.5	5.0	4.0	4.3
3-6	7.2	7.5	8.4	9.0
7-15	5.6	5.9	6.8	7.9
16 or more	3.3	3.8	5.2	6.8
No Response	.4	0	.3	.2

Do students like their jobs? Do they view their employment as positive? Do they feel that their parents are pleased about their employment?

Table 13

Attitudes About their Employment

	ENJOY WORK	MORE RESPONSIBLE BECAUSE OF WORK	PARENTS ARE PLEASED
Male	82.0	92.0	77.0
Female	98.0	89.0	87.0
11th Grade	91.0	87.0	83.0
12th Grade	86.0	94.0	80.0

Overall, the attitudes expressed by students about their work are enormously positive.

How do teachers view the employment circumstances? We have provided the information for all teachers as well as for three categories of teachers. Traditional academic teachers are those who teach English, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign languages; vocational teachers are those who teach home economics, industrial arts, business and vocational education; special setting teachers are those who teach physical education, special education or serve as counselors and librarians.

Table 14

Teacher Perspectives about Student Employment

	ALL TEACHERS	TRADITIONAL ACADEMIC	VOCATIONAL	SPECIAL SETTING
Positive	4.9	1.3	10.3	11.1
Mixed	56.1	51.3	72.4	50.0
Negative	39.0	47.4	17.2	38.9

As can be noted the least positive view is expressed by traditional academic teachers. Overall, however, the perspectives are fairly negative for all teachers, regardless of the teaching field.

Should the schools assist students with employment? Teachers were not particularly positive about this relatively new direction.

Table 15

Should the Schools Assist with Employment - A Teacher Perspective

	ALL TEACHERS	TRADITIONAL ACADEMIC	VOCATIONAL	SPECIAL SETTING
Yes	45.5	34.2	72.4	50.0
No	45.5	45.5	20.7	38.9
Mixed	8.9	9.2	6.9	11.1

What effect does employment have on academic performance? Students did not, for the most part, feel that employment influenced positively or negatively their academic performance. What was the teacher perspective?

Table 16

Effect of Employment on Academic Performance - Teacher Perspective

	ALL TEACHERS	TRADITIONAL ACADEMIC	VOCATIONAL	SPECIAL SETTING
Positive	.8	0.0	0.0	5.6
Mixed	38.2	31.6	48.3	50.0
Negative	56.9	67.1	41.4	38.9
None	4.1	1.3	10.3	5.6

Teachers, regardless of their teaching area, feel that employ-

ment has a significantly negative effect on student's academic performance. This is shown even more emphatically in Table 17 which reports on teachers' comparisons between working and non-working students in relation to academic performance.

Table 17

The Performance of Working Students in Relation to Non-working Students - Teacher Perspective

	ALL TEACHERS	TRADITIONAL ACADEMIC	VOCATIONAL	SPECIAL SETTING
Positive	1.7	0.0	0.0	11.1
Worse	68.1	76.7	53.6	55.6
No difference	26.9	20.5	39.3	33.3
Mixed	3.4	2.7	7.1	0.0

Have teachers altered their expectations of students in light of the increasing level of outside employment? Students thought this was occurring but not quite to the degree related by teachers.

Table 18

Altered Expectations of Students - Teacher Perspective

	ALL TEACHERS	TRADITIONAL ACADEMIC	VOCATIONAL	SPECIAL SETTING
Yes	54.5	59.2	37.9	61.1
No	45.5	40.8	62.1	38.9

Those responding affirmatively commented that they assigned less writing and reading, seldom asking students to do very much outside of class because they did not have any confidence that it would get done. They were using more and more class time for what

they would normally have considered "homework," leaving in the process, less direct instruction.

We were curious if teachers, in acknowledging the fact that students worked, were trying to use the work experience as a base for their instructional programs. For example, were students asked to maintain journals of their work experience as a writing exercise? Was the students' work experience made integral to discussions of the economic or governmental system?

Table 19

Was the Students' Work Experience Used as a Basis for Instruction

	ALL TEACHERS	TRADITIONAL ACADEMIC	VOCATIONAL	SPECIAL SETTING
Often	17.9	6.6	41.4	27.8
Sometimes	24.4	23.7	27.6	22.2
Seldom	46.3	53.9	27.6	44.4
Never	11.4	15.8	3.4	5.6

Do students learn responsibility from outside employment? Parents were generally more positive than teachers about the employment activities of their sons and daughters.

Table 20

Do Students Learn Responsibility from Outside Employment

	PARENTS	TEACHERS
Yes	87.1	61.0
No	10.6	24.4
Mixed	2.3	14.6

In general, educators view the high school as providing a range of beneifts for students, academic and extracurricular. In the next three tables we present information relating to such benefits in relation to the following four categories of students: Those not working, working up to 15 hours, working from 16-20 hours, working 21 and more hours.

Table 21

Student Participation in Extracurricular Activities

	NOT WORKING	WORKING UP TO 15 HRS.	WORKING FROM 16-20 HRS.	WORKING FROM 21 HRS. AND UP
Varsity Sports	41.2	31.9	28.7	20.4
Band/Orchestra	14.7	11.6	8.7	5.3
Student Government	4.9	5.9	4.0	2.5
Debate/Drama	10.9	7.0	6.7	5.3

Clearly, those who don't work have the greatest access to what the schools offer extracurricularly. This does not, however, establish a causal relationship. People may choose to work rather than participate in extra activities. Attendance at extracurricular activities also follows a similar pattern.

Table 22

Student Attendance at Extracurricular Activities

	NOT WORKING	WORKING UP TO 15 HRS.	WORKING FROM 16-20 HRS.	WORKING FROM 21 HRS. AND UP
Never	12.0	10.2	11.4	15.4
Once every 3 months	11.6	10.9	12.7	20.9
Once a week	25.8	25.4	25.3	18.3
More than once a week	22.7	21.1	16.0	10.7

What are the perceptions of skills? More students not working or working less that 15 hours tend to believe their skills are high in the academic areas; however, in the areas of social studies and reading, the differences among groups are not great.

Table 23

Perceived Academic Skills

	WORKING	WORKING UP TO 15 HRS.	WORKING FROM 16-20 HRS.	WORKING FROM 21 HRS. AND UP
		Mathematics		
High	12.8	11.2	9.2	7.1
Average	46.8	48.6	51.0	51.7
Poor	1.7	2.1	2.9	3.2
		Science		
High	11.9	9.1	8.4	5.7
Average	47.5	52.9	47.8	5[illegible].3
Poor	.5	1.3	1.1	2.0
		Social Studies		
High	13.9	11.2	11.1	11.6
Average	43.5	49.5	45.8	47.7
Poor	.7	1.3	1.7	2.7
		Oral Language		
High	15.1	10.4	11.5	9.9
Average	44.2	54.2	49.6	52.6
Poor	2.1	.8	1.5	2.0
		Reading		
High	17.7	16.9	19.3	15.2
Average	40.2	41.7	39.4	44.8
Poor	.7	1.1	1.7	1.0

Table 23

(Continued)

	NOT WORKING	WORKING UP TO 15 HRS.	WORKING FROM 16-20 HRS.	WORKING FROM 21 HRS. AND UP
		Writing		
High	14.9	10.6	10.3	6.7
Average	44.4	54.9	49.3	51.8
Poor	3.0	1.1	1.3	2.8

Another issue about which we wanted information related to socio-economic differences. Using the seven census categories, in relation to fathers' occupations, we examined skill perceptions and extracurricular activities.

Table 24

Perception of Skills According to Father's Occupational Status

FATHER'S OCCUPATION	HIGH MATH	HIGH SCIENCE	HIGH SOCIAL STUDIES	HIGH ORAL LANGUAGE	HIGH READING	HIGH WRITING
Prof/Tech (Census Cat. 1-2)	16.2	17.4	18.7	17.0	26.0	16.0
Manager/Official/ Proprietor (Census Cat. 3-4)	10.7	7.5	11.1	13.6	17.6	10.0
Operator/Service Worker/Laborer (Census Cat. 5-6-7)	5.5	4.0	6.5	6.0	10.1	8.5

The foregoing information, together with the information in Table 25, provides a discouraging picture. School administrators had not expected such stark differences along socio-economic lines.

Tables 24 and 25 raise a number of questions about who gains the most from the school and its educational offerings. In addi-

Table 25

Extracurricular Activities by Father's Occupational Status

FATHER'S OCCUPATION	VARSITY SPORTS	BAND/ ORCHESTRA	STUDENT GOVERNMENT	DEBATE/ DRAMA	ATTENDANCE MORE THAN ONCE PER WK.
Prof/Tech (Census Cat. 1-2)	39.3	19.8	6.8	13.3	22.8
Manager/Official/ Proprietor (Census Cat. 3-4)	31.7	10.2	5.6	9.4	17.7
Operator/Service Worker/Laborer Cencus Cat. 5-6-7)	19.1	5.5	2.0	3.0	11.2

tion, it should be noted these are differences in the proportions of students within Census Categories who work more than 20 hours/ week.

Table 26

Hours of Work Per Week by Father's Occupational Status

FATHER'S OCCUPATION	Hours of Work/Week No Hours	1-15 Hours	16-20 Hours	More than 21 hours
Prof/Tech (Census Cat. 1-2)	22.7	25.1	26.0	28.3
Manager/Official/ Proprietor (Census Cat. 3-4)	19.3	22.3	26.7	31.2
Operator/Service Worker/Laborer (Census Cat. 5-6-7)	18.5	20.5	24.0	37.0

How do employers respond to their student employees? The remaining information in this monograph relates to employers. In

general, they provide a very positive view; to some degree, they provide a contrast to what often appears in the popular press about adolescents.

Table 27

Employer Ratings of the Job Performance of Their Student Employees

Very High	25%
High	38%
Average	34%
Low	2%
Depends	2%

Table 28

Employer Views About the Reliability of Their Student Employees (Honesty, meeting work schedules, etc.)

Very reliable	28%
Reliable	47%
Mixed	25%
Unreliable	0%

When we asked teachers about how many hours were reasonable for students to work per week, they placed 15 as the upper limit. Parents, on the other hand, viewed up to 20 hours as reasonable. Employers in fairly substantial numbers saw up to 25 hours as reasonable.

We asked whether employers placed any limits on the number of

Table 29

Number of Hours Students Should Work Per Week
Employer Perspective

1-10	2%
11-15	15%
16-20	42%
21-25	30%
26-30	2%
Over 30	6%
Depends	2%
Should not work	2%

hours that their student employees could work. The majority (54%) did, but these were related to a very large degree to the nature of their businesses and the hours they were open. In only a few cases was it a philosophical-educational issue. We provided employers with a number of vignettes--one of which was a situation where a student inquired about working closer to 40 hours because he "really needed the money." Almost all of the employers indicated they would try to accommodate the student if they could.

Do employers consider employment to be a good learning experience? Do students learn responsibility? We were interested in whether employers discussed with student employees their school related studies. Table 30 reports their responses.

In relation to the academic skills (reading, writing, and language) of their student employees, employers were quite positive, as shown in Table 31.

Table 30

Frequency of Conversations with Student Employees about Their School Studies

Almost every day	11%
Once a week	21%
Once a month	15%
Seldom	26%
Almost never	23%
Depends on problems	2%
Twice a month	2%

Table 31

Employers' Assessments of the Academic Skills of Their Student Employees

Among the best students in their class	6%
Above average	40%
Average	40%
Below average	4%
Don't know	9%
Depends on job	2%

Closing Statement

In this monograph we have presented some information that we thought might be of broad interest. The monographs which follow will be more detailed and will focus on particular aspects of the data; for example, socio-economic issues, teacher perspectives, em-

ployer perspectives, male-female student differences. These monographs will contain more interpretive discussion than was the case in this introductory monograph.